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The Main Thing Devotional

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Pray Like Your Life Depends on It

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“And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to praise standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your father who is in the secret place; and your father who sees you in secret will reward you openly. And when you pray, do not use being repetitions as the heathen do. For the things that they will be heard for their many words. Therefore do not be like them. For your father knows the things you have need of before you ask him.” Matthew 6:5-8

Pray Like Your Life Depends on It

The last three weeks have been a bit of a whirlwind for me. After spending two weeks in Orlando, Florida in full day-long intensive classes to continue my graduate studies, this past week I attended Catalyst Atlanta with many of the pastors and spouses of the Collegedale SDA Church. In the midst of all the information I soaked up like I was drinking out of a fire hydrant during these educational experiences, one thing kept rising to the forefront of importance. How do I be a better, more effective chaplain? Pray. How do I be a better, more loving wife? Pray. How do I be a better, more empathetic listener? Pray. How do I be a better, more compassionate human being? Pray. How do I do anything good, successful, or impactful? Pray.

“Pray like your life depends on it,” my wise professor Dr. Joseph Kidder pounded into me.

Here in Matthew 6, where we’ll be spending the next few weeks unpacking these verses in greater detail to see how they practically apply to our lives, Jesus is sharing with His disciples about how powerful prayer is.

He tells us, commands us, to go into our room, close the door and pray to our Father. Famous author and speaker Andy Stanley suggests that what Jesus is really saying by telling us to close the door is that we are to demonstrate our dependency on God by turning our back on everything we have to do, everything we are worried about, in order to spend meaningful, unrushed time with Him.

In fact, we are to begin our prayers by saying, “Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.” Matthew 6:9

Reading this verse in the original Greek shows us that this is both an intimate and exalting address towards God - “He is both near to us and approachable and at the same time majestically beyond us,” the Andrews Study Bible beautifully describes.

So my question to you today is this: will you make the Main Thing, the main thing in your life today by finding a sacred place where you can forsake all the things you could be worried about and turn to the God above who loves you without abandon, declaring to Him this prayer:

“Father, I’m here! And I’m praying like my life depends on it, because it does. All that I am, all that I must accomplish today, is dependent on you. Let your power and your will be unleashed in my life today. Draw close to me and let me know the joy of your salvation!”

Reflection & Upcoming Events:

1. **Where is your sacred place?** The place you can go to at a particular time during your day to leave behind all your worries and spend meaningful time in the presence of God?
2. Since God already knows your needs, according to verse 8, spend the majority of your prayer time today focusing on giving **praise (for who God is), and thanksgiving (for what He’s done in your life)**.
3. Join us this **Friday evening for Vespers in the University Church at 7:30pm hosted by uQuest Missions: *where every major has a mission!***
4. Experience worship and belonging at **Afterglow** in the South Atrium if the church, immediately following Vespers.

-Anna Bennett